

HOUSE to HOUSE  
HEART to HEART

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# House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 22 NUMBER 6

## *Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All*

*Allen Webster*

No one gets to heaven dry-eyed, smooth shouldered, and soft-footed. Christianity begins with self-denial, taking up a cross, and following the Nazarene along the way of the cross (Luke 9:23–26). It requires godly sorrow to enter the narrow gate and forgoing sin’s pleasures to travel on the difficult road (Matthew 5:4; 7:13–14; 2 Corinthians 7:10).

One may have to come to Christ over the objections of family (Matthew 10:34), the ostracism of friends (1 John 3:13), and the mockery of the world (Matthew 5:10). He runs the risk of being labeled as part of a hate group, may suffer for political incorrectness, and in some places meet death prematurely as a martyr (Revelation 2:10).

Even avoiding these problems, one will invest significant resources. If he attends all church services and is involved in its usual activities (youth, visitation, caregiving, fellowship, revivals) for a couple hours a week, he will invest about 20,000 hours over fifty years. The average American family income (filing jointly) is \$117,795. If such a family gives 10 percent for fifty years, then they contribute \$588,975. If one is active in Bible reading, teaching, evangelism, and shepherding, then the investment of talent and energy is substantial.

Will heaven be worth all of that?

### **A FREE TRAVEL PACKAGE TO PARADISE**

What if I could tell you credibly that I had free airfare for you to fly to a unique island? When you step off the plane, you will be in a garden paradise. Its temperature is constant perfection. Its beauty is beyond comparison. Its amenities are luxurious. Its activities are enjoyable and meaningful. How much would such a trip be worth?

On the island, the music is amazing. Perfect voices, perfect pitch, and perfect harmony will leave you longing for more.

You will be given the keys to your own mansion, a lifetime supply of delicious food and gorgeous clothing, and a crown to wear. All your debts will be paid, and you will become an instant billionaire.

You will never have to work again. No sweating under a hot sun; no toiling until your muscles ache; no long meetings or stressful deadlines. It is not a vacation; it is a transfer. It does not end; it will not become a fond memory lost in the busyness of a hectic return to reality. It is reality. The stressful life becomes the fading memory.

On this island, there is absolute safety, serenity, and security. No armies rattle

sabers—there are no tanks, fighter jets, warships, or nuclear weapons. No violent person lives on the entire island. All citizens are peace loving. Doors have no locks; windows no latches; mansions no burglar alarms; premises no security lights. The island has no guns. No jails. No police force. No backlogged courts. No drug pushers, pedophiles, carjackers, or robbers.

There are no hospitals, doctors' offices, or pharmacies, for you will never need their services. There are no pills, shots, slings, wheelchairs, crutches, prostheses, casts, glasses, dentures, hearing aids, or canes. When you step off the plane, if you have cancer, it will be cured. If you struggle with heart disease, the effects of a stroke, or lingering results of an injury, these will disappear. If you have a handicap, it will be removed. The blind sees the island's beauty. The deaf hears its songs. The crippled walks its streets. The mute praises its Maker. You will never hurt again—no groans, grimaces, pain relievers, chiropractors, or pain clinics. If you are old, your youth will be restored.

You will never be sad. One day you will think, "I can't remember the last time I was unhappy." You will face no anxieties, tears, discouragement, despair, depression, troubles, sorrows, or unhappiness ever again. You will experience constant laughter, joy, release, ease, and elation—without limits, without end, without interruption.

You will meet grand heroes of the past. Abel, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Ruth, David, Elijah, Isaiah, Esther, Daniel, Mary, Peter, John, Paul, and Barnabas all live on the island. You could live next door to any one of them. You might have lunch with another—or one after another, day after day.

You will be met by Christian loved ones you had long missed—a mother, father, brother, sister,

grandparent, friend, teacher, neighbor—and ancestors you never knew nor had dreamed of meeting. They are all alive—perfectly healthy and completely happy.

You will live forever in perfect health. There are no funerals, funeral homes, caskets, cemeteries, granite markers, or plastic flowers. Your body will not age; your eye will not dim; your hearing will not diminish; your tongue will not stammer; your skin will not wrinkle; your hair will not thin; your hand will not tremble; your step will not falter; your energy will not wane; your mind will not slow. There are no broken bones, skinned knees, or bruised bodies.

You will meet the King of the Universe—your Maker, Redeemer, Savior, and Father—and His Son, Jesus. They wait for you there. You will bask in their light, glory in their beauty, and worship their holiness.

Your family and friends may join you at any time. There are tickets for them. You can live together forever. There is an open invitation and plenty of room. Everyone who has a ticket is welcome.

(Read about these things in Genesis 25:8; Psalm 16:11; 116:15; John 14:1–3; 2 Corinthians 5:1–10; 12:4; Philippians 3:20–21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–18; 1 Timothy 6:15–16; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 11:1–12:22; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 2:7; 7:9; 14:13; 19:1–10; 21:1–27; 22:1–21. For scriptural discussion see [housetohouse.com/worth-it-all/](http://housetohouse.com/worth-it-all/).)

### COME, GO WITH US

How much would a ticket to such an island be worth? A million dollars? A billion? A lifetime of preparation? How much abuse would one take to go there? Could any price be too high?

That island is, of course, heaven; arriving is the Judgment Day (Matthew 25:31–33); the plane is the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 15:24); the ticket is salvation (Acts 2:38; 15:11).

Its price is free, for Jesus paid for it with His blood (Ephesians 1:7). It simply requires our reciprocal love, obedient faith, and absolute allegiance (Matthew 22:36–40; Mark 16:16; John 3:16; 14:15; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 5:8–9).

When Jesus asked, "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (Mark 8:36), He meant heaven will be worth it all. Our present sufferings are not worth comparing with that glory (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17). Since our earthly existence is less than one percent of our lifespan as eternal beings (James 4:14; Ecclesiastes 12:7), any comparison quickly diminishes to negligible.

Remember heaven is one of two—and only two—destinations. We will exist in eternity (Ecclesiastes 12:7), but the earth will not (2 Peter 3:10–12). The only places are the lake of fire and the island (Revelation 21:1, 8). To miss the island is to end up in the lake. The stakes are high, but the odds are in your favor since God wants to save you (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).

### COME, GO WITH US

As Moses said to Hobab, "We are setting out for the place of which the Lord said . . . Come with us" (Numbers 10:29). "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come'" (Revelation 22:17).

God is not inviting us to live in a shack on the backside of heaven; He wants us to move in with Him in the big house. God is not inviting us to sit on heaven's doorstep and listen to its songs; He wants us to be singers. He is not offering a tour of the gates of pearl, walls of jasper, and street of gold; He wants us to live in the halls of the palace and see the King in His beauty (Psalm 27:4).<sup>1</sup> There is a crown in heaven that will never be worn on any head but yours (2 Timothy 4:8); a mansion now empty, just waiting for you (John 14:2); robes hanging in its closets in just your size (Revelation 7:9); a place set for you at the Lamb's marriage feast (Revelation 19:7). Surely "the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" (Psalm 34:8).

Jesus reaches pierced hands to welcome you (Matthew 11:28). God looks on with interest (Luke 15:20–32). The Holy Spirit waits with pen in hand to enroll you in the Book of Life (Luke 10:20). Obey the gospel (Acts 8:35–40). Remain faithful (Revelation 2:10; 22:14).

Sound good? We have some extra tickets.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> This section is adapted from something I once heard or read. I have been unable to find the original source.



# 16 Quick Scriptures to *ENCOURAGE*

## **Worry and Anxiety**

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:5–6).

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6–7).

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30).

“Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

## **Need encouragement**

“The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit” (Psalm 34:18).

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

“We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

## **Health issues**

“My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (Psalm 73:26).

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

## **Receive bad news**

“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

“Surely he will never be shaken; the righteous will be in everlasting remembrance. He will not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord” (Psalm 112:6–7).

## **Poorest Sermon I Ever Heard**

A preacher was suddenly called out of town and he asked the new youth minister to conduct services on Sunday. When he returned, he asked his wife how the young man had done. “Not so well,” she reported. “It was the poorest sermon I had ever heard—nothing to it at all.” Meeting the youth minister later, the preacher asked him how he had managed. “Pretty good, I guess,” replied the young man. “As I did not have time to prepare anything myself, I just used one of your sermons.”

—Author Unknown



## Make Children Go to Church?

A mother went to wake her son for church one Sunday morning. When she knocked on his door, he said, "I'm not going!" "Why not?" she asked. "I'll give you two good reasons," he said. "One, they don't like me. Two, I don't like them." His mother replied, "I'll give you two good reasons why *you will* go to church. One, you're 47 years old. Two, you're the preacher!" —Author Unknown

*"A merry heart does good"*

PROVERBS 17:22



## The Family

The family is like a book—  
The children are the leaves,  
The parents are the covers  
That protecting beauty gives.

At first the pages of the book  
Are blank and purely fair,  
But time soon writes memories  
And paints pictures there.

Love is the little golden clasp  
That bindeth up the trust;  
O, break it not, lest all the leaves  
Should scatter and be lost.

—Author Unknown

*"A time to love"*

ECCLESIASTES 3:8

For more material on the home and family, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, grandparents, and family finances, go to [www.housetohouse.com](http://www.housetohouse.com).



# Perfect Love

Someone has written the following description of true love:

Slow to suspect—quick to trust,  
Slow to condemn—quick to justify,  
Slow to offend—quick to defend,  
Slow to expose—quick to shield,  
Slow to reprimand—quick to forbear,  
Slow to belittle—quick to appreciate,  
Slow to demand—quick to give,  
Slow to provoke—quick to conciliate,  
Slow to hinder—quick to help,  
Slow to resent—quick to forgive.

—Author Unknown

This description reminds us of the one given by Paul in 1 Corinthians: "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

## Children's Changing Attitudes

Age 4: "My parents can do anything."

Age 8: "There might be one or two things they don't know."

Age 12: "Naturally my parents don't understand."

Age 14: "I never realized how hopelessly old fashioned they are."

Age 21: "You would expect them to feel that way; they are out of date."

Age 25: "They come up with a good idea now and then."

Age 30: "I wonder what Mom and Dad think I should do?"

Age 40: "Let's wait until we discuss it with our parents."

Age 50: "What would Mom and Dad have thought about it?"

Age 60: "I wish I could talk it over with them one more time." —Author Unknown

*"I put away childish things"*

1 CORINTHIANS 13:11



# GOD'S DIVIDING LINE

When the Israelites had made an idol and worshipped it, the Lord punished them (Exodus 32).

Moses said, "Whoever is on the Lord's side—come to me! And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves to him" (Exodus 32:26). That day God had a dividing line.

God has often used water as a dividing line.

**The Flood: The Dividing Line between the Old and the New (Genesis 6:5–7, 17).** In response to wickedness, God destroyed the world with a flood (Genesis 6:17). However, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8). Note how he responded to the news of impending doom (Genesis 6:22; 7:5). What consequences did obedience bring about in Noah's life? He was not unprepared for judgment (Matthew 24:37–39). He moved with godly fear and saved his household (Hebrews 11:7).

**The Red Sea: The Dividing Line between Bondage and Freedom (Exodus 14:1–31).** During the life of Joseph, the children of Israel enjoyed years of prosperity and peace. However, there arose a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph (Exodus 1:8). He made life bitter for the Israelites (Exodus 1:9–14). When the children of Israel groaned because of their harsh conditions, the Lord heard their cry (Exodus 2:23–24; 3:7). In their deliverance, the Lord tested the Israelites as he led them to what seemed to be a trap. The Lord parted the Red Sea and the Israelites went across in freedom. What was the driving influence behind the people's obedience to cross the Red Sea? It was faith in the Lord (Hebrews 11:29). Once again, obedient faith allowed His people to cross His dividing line.

**The Jordan River: The Dividing Line between Naaman's Leprosy and Divine**

**Cure (2 Kings 5:1–14).** Naaman was a great Syrian commander who also had the favor of the Lord because He had given him victory. He was a man of honor and valor. However, he had a major setback in his health. He was a leper (2 Kings 5:1). To be cured of his leprosy, Naaman had to dip in the Jordan River.

**The Principle: God Expects Us to Respond in Faithful Obedience.** In all three examples, obedience was the key. Water is still God's dividing line. God demands obedience to the gospel by being baptized (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

What about you? Have you crossed God's dividing line? There are blessings waiting for you (Ephesians 1:3). Jesus has gone to prepare a place for those who have responded in faithful obedience to the Lord (John 14:3).

—Gus Nichols

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.

## Bible Quiz

VOLUME 22:6

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark! We'll grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark "Annual Bible Reading Chart" as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions taken from the King James Version

### Answers to Last Issue

**Great Bible Events:** 1. Jesus (Colossians 1:16); 2. Thanksgiving (1 Timothy 4:4); 3. Rib (Genesis 2:21); 4. Birds, fish (Genesis 1:21); 5. Water changed to blood (Exodus 7:17); 6. 7 (Genesis 41:30); 7. Rameses (Genesis 47:11); 8. Babylon (1 Chronicles 9:1); 9. Anointed him with oil (1 Chronicles 11:3); 10. Philistines (1 Chronicles 12:19); 11. Ark of the Covenant (1 Samuel 4:4); 12. Mantle (2 Kings 2:8); 13. Chariot of fire/whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11); 14. Elisha's staff (2 Kings 4:31); 15. Stick (2 Kings 6:6); 16. Blinded them (2 Kings 6:18); 17. In the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17); 18. Judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10).



## Noah's Boat

**Directions:** Find your answers in Genesis 6–9.

- How many years did God give sinful man before the flood came? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did Noah find in the eyes of the Lord, that all men need? \_\_\_\_\_
- What are the names of Noah's sons? \_\_\_\_\_
- Out of what type of wood was the ark made? \_\_\_\_\_
- What were the dimensions of the ark? \_\_\_\_\_
- Did the ark have a window? \_\_\_\_\_
- Did Noah take food for the animals? \_\_\_\_\_
- "Thus did Noah; according to \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ commanded him, so \_\_\_\_\_ he."
- How many of each clean beast was Noah to take on the ark (7:2)? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many of each unclean animal did Noah take? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many of each fowl did Noah take (7:2)? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many days did it rain (7:12)? \_\_\_\_\_
- How old was Noah when the flood began? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many people were saved on the ark (7:13)? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who shut the door of the ark (7:16)? \_\_\_\_\_
- "\_\_\_\_\_ in whose \_\_\_\_\_ was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, \_\_\_\_\_."
- Where did the ark come to rest after the flood (8:4)? \_\_\_\_\_
- What two birds did Noah send from the ark (8:7–8)? \_\_\_\_\_
- Which bird returned to Noah's hand? \_\_\_\_\_
- What kind of leaf did the bird bring back the second time? \_\_\_\_\_
- What religious exercise did Noah do after getting off of the ark (8:20)? \_\_\_\_\_
- God promised to never again do what (8:21)? \_\_\_\_\_

# The Doors Are **OPEN** Again

I love to think that my life should spring from Christ's death; my healing from His wounds; my glory from His shame.

If God forsake Him not, I cannot be accepted. If thorns press not His temples, I can never wear a crown of glory. Now, in the grave He lies; He must conquer death, or I must suffer forever. If there ever was a time when all the sounds of heaven were still, and not one note of angelic music sounded through the skies, 'twas when that lifeless, mangled form was lying in the rich man's tomb!

But the voice of God pierces the gloom and silence of the grave; angels attend upon His second birth (Christ's resurrection); with a glorious escort He passes upward in His chariot of clouds, and enters in through the everlasting gates.

Those doors were closed when Adam fell; they now receive the conqueror of sin and death. And, glorious thought! They are still unbarred; and I and you, and all that follow Him in life, shall one day enter through the gates into the everlasting city of our God. — John Augustus Williams, in "Raccoon" John Smith, *The Life of Elder John Smith*, page 565.

*"Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go through them"*

PSALM 118:19

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.

## Recommended Resource



The Gospel Broadcasting Network is unique in the world of religious TV—commercial free, and they never ask for money! Sponsored by the churches of Christ, GBN is available on many cable systems as well as through their smartphone apps, the Roku device, and at [gbntv.org](http://gbntv.org).

## I want to learn more about the Bible!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State: \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Prayer requests or comments: \_\_\_\_\_

### I would like:



A Bible Correspondence Course



A DVD Bible Study



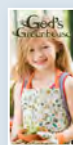
An In-Home Bible Study

## New Tracts!

- Heaven Bound
- If Jesus Were President
- What Does It Mean to be Forgiven?
- What Jesus Said about Divorce



### More subjects:



God's Greenhouse



The Way



Lead Me to Some Soul Today



Sealed by the Spirit



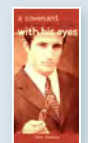
Biography of Saul of Tarsus



Does It Make Any Difference Which Church I Attend?



Do I Really Matter?



A Covenant Every Man Ought to Make With His Eyes



Lust



How to Rebuild Trust in a Marriage

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# God's Twelve-Step Program

For many years, Alcoholics Anonymous has used a “Twelve-Step Program” to help its members overcome addiction to alcohol. God also has a “Twelve-Step Program.”

Marshall Keeble was a powerful and effective evangelist who led thousands to Christ during his sixty-five year ministry. One of his favorite sermons was titled “Five Steps to Church and Seven to Heaven.” Simple math reveals that Keeble had discovered God's twelve-step program.

The five steps to being saved from sin and added to the spiritual body of Christ include the following:

**Hear.** To be saved one must hear the gospel, the good news of Christ's death for the sins of mankind. “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).

**Believe.** Having heard the gospel of Christ, one must believe it. Paul declared that the gospel is “the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16).

**Repent.** Jesus said, “I tell you . . . unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3, 5).

**Confess.** This is a confession of faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Romans 10:9–10).

**Be Baptized.** Baptism is in order to have the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) and to have sins washed away (Acts 22:16). At the point of baptism one is saved and added to the church (Acts 2:47).

Then what? The spiritual journey has not ended. It has only begun. From the watery grave of baptism, one is raised to “walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:3–4).

Peter lays out seven wonderful Christian qualities that Christians must add to their faith (2 Peter 1:5–7):

**Virtue.** This is moral excellence.

**Knowledge.** This is an understanding of God's will as revealed in His word. All Christians are to grow in such (2 Peter 3:18).

**Self-control.** This has to do with bridleing our attitudes and actions.

**Perseverance.** This relates to patiently persisting in doing what is right. Christians are to stay with the job of following Christ.

**Godliness.** This is the child of God coming to look more and more like his heavenly Father.

**Brotherly kindness.** Paul wrote, “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32).

**Love.** This is the queen of all the Christian graces (1 Corinthians 13:13).

If one will take the five steps to church and then follow up with the practice of the seven Christian graces, Peter assures his readers (including us) that “an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10–11).

Are you following God's “Twelve-Step Program”? —Hugh Fulford

## Consider

If you know for sure that the religious path you are on would not get you to heaven, would you change? If there was the possibility of a doubt, would you investigate?

—Why not request a personal Bible study today?

*“Be even more diligent to make your call and election sure”*

2 PETER 1:10



# THAT NO ONE SHOULD BOAST

The difference between salvation by works and salvation by grace is the difference between, “Hey, look what I’ve done!” and “Look what God has done for me.”

We are saved by grace through faith. There are works that demonstrate the reality of our faith (James 2:21–24), but no works have merit to cancel sins or earn salvation. If they did, we could boast in them.

Paul wrote, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9). “For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God” (Romans 4:2).

“I will not boast in anything, no gifts, no power, no wisdom, but I will boast in Jesus Christ; His death and resurrection. Why should I gain from His reward? I cannot give an answer. But this I know with all my heart: His wounds have paid my ransom” (*How Deep the Father’s Love for Us*, Stuart Townend). “But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Galatians 6:14).

—Cecil May, Montgomery, Alabama

“Lest anyone should boast”

EPHESIANS 2:9



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## GOD’S DESIGN FOR THE FAMILY

### BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

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